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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 7 August 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, dated 7 August 2015, on the seventh anniversary of the August 2008 war (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 33, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vakhtang **Makharoblishvili**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the identical letters dated 7 August 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the seventh anniversary of the August 2008 war

7 August 2015 marks the seventh anniversary of Russia's large-scale military aggression against Georgia and occupation of regions of the sovereign and independent State. Seven years after the August 2008 war, 20 per cent of Georgia's territory remains under illegal Russian military occupation, resulting in mass violations of fundamental rights of the local population and hundreds of thousands of victims of ethnic cleansing, who are still denied the right to safe and dignified return to the places of their original residence.

Despite the constructive measures undertaken by the Government of Georgia, Moscow continues its policy of creeping annexation, which is directed against Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and violates the fundamental principles of international law and the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement. A clear illustration of that is the signature of the so-called "treaties" on integration with the Sokhumi and Tskhinvali occupation regimes, the continuation of the installation of artificial obstacles along the occupation line and placement of banners marking the so-called "state border" by Moscow. Such actions not only violate the fundamental principles of international law, but also infringe political, civil, social and economic rights of local residents, including their right to freedom of movement.

The Georgian side underlines the importance of the format of the Geneva International Discussions, established in accordance with the 12 August 2008 Ceasefire Agreement. Georgia is committed to further continue its constructive engagement in the Discussions aimed at resolving the outstanding political issues between Georgia and Russia, first and foremost the non-use of force pledge by the Russian Federation, the establishment of international security arrangements, as well as the safe and dignified return of the displaced population.

In the existing situation, the firm and consistent support of the international community is of the utmost importance. Georgia expresses its gratitude and once again calls upon the international community to continue its firm support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

During the past few years, the Government of Georgia has undertaken a number of significant steps to de-escalate the conflict with Russia, which resulted in the resumption of trade, cultural and humanitarian relations between the two countries. The Government of Georgia will further continue the implementation of its de-escalation policy and will use all available diplomatic and political tools in order to resolve the existing conflict through peaceful means only, based on the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia would like to seize this opportunity to once again express its deepest sympathy to the families of the Georgian soldiers and civilian population who fell victim to the August 2008 War.

Tbilisi, 7 August 2015